

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 05827 01 OF 02 260824Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
SMI-01 SS-15 NSC-05 /048 W
-----260900Z 120831 /12

R 251516Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4597
USIA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BERLIN 5827

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL, GE
SUBJECT: DRESDEN ART EXHIBIT

REF: BERLIN 7173 26 NOV 76

SUMMARY: U.S. AND GDR MUSEUM AND MINISTRY OF CULTURE OFFICIALS COMPLETED FIVE DAYS OF TALKS AND NEGOTIATIONS ON THE EXHIBITION OF DRESDEN ART IN THREE U.S. MUSEUMS IN 1978-79. WHILE NO AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED, MANY OF THE COMPLICATED DETAILS WERE IRONED OUT, SUCH AS INSURANCE, PROTOCOL AND DATES, WITH OTHERS SUCH AS AGREED-UPON CONTENT AND OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION YET TO BE DETERMINED. THE US DRAFT AGREEMENT WAS SUBMITTED FOR PERUSAL AND THE GDR WILL RESPOND WITH ITS OWN DRAFT AND FINAL LIST OF OBJECTS BY MID-JUNE. END SUMMARY.

1. AN ELEVEN-MAN DELEGATION FROM THREE U.S. MUSEUMS SPENT FIVE DAYS(APRIL 18-22) IN DRESDEN AND BERLIN DISCUSSING WITH GDR CULTURAL OFFICIALS THE EXHIBITION OF ART FROM DRESDEN WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE IN 1978 AND 1979. THE US DELEGATION'S SPOKESMAN WAS J. CARTER BROWN OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART IN WASHINGTON, WHO
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BERLIN 05827 01 OF 02 260824Z

ACTED AS CHIEF NEGOTIATOR. JOINING HIM WERE PHILIPPE DI MONTEBELLO, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART IN NYC AND IAN MCKIBBIN WHITE, DIRECTOR OF MUSEUMS IN SAN FRANCISCO, AS WELL AS EXPERTS IN THE VARIOUS FIELDS TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE EXHIBIT FROM THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND THE METROPOLITAN. AT THE REQUEST OF BOTH THE US AND GDR SIDES, THE PAO WAS

PRESENT BOTH IN DRESDEN AND BERLIN DURING ALL NEGOTIATIONS AND WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE IN A LIAISON AND FACILITATIVE CAPACITY.

2. IN DRESDEN, SPECIFIC OBJECTS WERE EXAMINED AND DISCUSSED FOR THREE FULL DAYS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE OVERALL CONCEPT OF THE EXHIBIT, DRAWN PRIMARILY FROM THE BEJEWELLED ART OBJECTS IN THE GREEN VAULT, THE PORCELAIN COLLECTION, AND THE GALLERY OF OLD MASTERS IN THE SWINGER. TWO DRESDEN MUSEUM OFFICIALS MENSHAUSEN AND ROST, WERE THE GDR REPRESENTATIVES IN CHARGE, WHO THEN CAME TO BERLIN FOR THE LENGTHLY NEGOTIATIONS AT THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE ON APRIL 21.

3. THE SIX-HOUR MEETING TOOK PLACE AT THE MINISTRY AND WAS CHAired BY THE HEAD OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT, DR. HELMUT TAUTZ, IN THE COMPANY OF FIVE OTHER MINCULT OFFICIALS, INCLUDING MENSHAUSEN AND ROST. TAUTZ OPENED THE MEETING WITH A STATEMENT WELCOMING THE AMERICAN DELEGATION AND DESCRIBING THE DRESDEN ART EXHIBIT AS "AN EXTRAORDINARY CULTURAL EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY AND A TREMENDOUS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES." ACKNOWLEDGING AND GRATEFUL FOR THE U.S. INITIATIVE, TAUTZ SAID NOTHING OF SUCH VALUE HAS EVER BEEN SENT BY THE GDR TO ANY OTHER COUNTRY, AND JOKED THAT HE COULD ONLY REGRET THAT EVERYTHING COULD NOT BE LOANED BUT SOMETHING HAD TO REMAIN FOR THE MANY ANNUAL VISITORS TO

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 BERLIN 05827 01 OF 02 260824Z

DRESDEN. HE CONCLUDED WITH THE ADMISSION THAT A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS STILL REMAINED AND HOPED THAT THE US DELEGATION WOULD ADDRESS THEM.

4. BROWN RESPONDED BY THANKING THE GDR SIDE FOR ITS INTELLIGENT APPROACH AND COOPERATION TOWARDS A SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH CERTAINLY DID EXIST. HE THEN PLUNGED INTO THE PROBLEMS THEMSELVES, WHICH WERE ESSENTIALLY A MATTER OF THE CONTENT OF THE PAINTING SECTION OF THE OVERALL EXHIBIT. UNTIL THIS PROBLEM WAS SOLVED, HE SAID, AN AGREEMENT COULD NOT BE SIGNED.

5. THREE SPECIFIC WORKS WERE THE FOCUS OF HIS REMARKS: RAPHAEL'S SISTINE MADONNA, GIORGONE'S SLEEPING VENUS AND VAN EYCK'S TRYPTICH. ADDITIONALLY, HE NAMED OTHER WORKS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE BETTER SUBSTANCE TO THE OVERALL CONCEPT - WORKS BY CRANACH, MANTEGNA, BOTTICELLI, CORREGGIO, TITIAN, RUBENS, VERMEER AND ZURBARAN. (FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY, THE INDIVIDUAL DETAILS SURROUNDING EACH OF THESE ARTISTS'

WORKS WILL NOT BE ADDRESSED IN THIS CABLE). BROWN CONCLUDED BY POINTING OUT THAT DRESDEN WAS WORLD FAMOUS FOR ITS COLLECTION OF THE HIGH RENAISSANCE AND THAT THE PAINTINGS REQUESTED WOULD SERVE TO ENHANCE DRESDEN'S REPUTATION IN THE U.S.

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 05827 02 OF 02 260844Z
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SMI-01 SS-15 NSC-05 /048 W
-----260858Z 121026 /12

R 251516Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 BERLIN 5827

6. TAUTZ REPLIED THAT WHILE UNDERSTANDING THE AMERICAN DELEGATION'S DESIRE TO HAVE THE WORKS REQUESTED, SUCH A DECISION WAS OUTSIDE HIS AND THE PRESENT DELEGATION'S COMPETENCE. " BUT LET US AVOID ALL ILLUSIONS DIRECTLY AT THE OUTSET," TAUTZ STATED" I CAN TELL YOU RIGHT NOW THAT THE SISTINE MADONNA AND THE VENUS CAN NEVER LEAVE THE GDR. I THINK I CAN ALSO SAY THE SAME FOR THE VAN EYCK." HE SAID THE MINISTER OF CULTURE WOULD HAVE TO BE INFORMED OF ALL THE REQUESTS AND THAT FINAL DECISIONS COULD ONLY BE MADE BY THE EAST GERMAN GOVERNMENT.

7. BROWN SAID THAT AS AN EXPRESSION OF THE GREAT INTEREST IN AND NEED FOR THE PICTURES CITED, HE AND DAVID ROCKEFELLER WERE PREPARED TO RETURN AT A FUTURE DATE AND NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY AGAIN WITH HORST SINDERMAN. AT THIS POINT, A MEMBER OF THE GDR DELEGATION, THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE'S DIRECTOR OF MUSEUMS SCHMEICHEL, WHO HAD SAT BY SILENTLY , ADDRESSED BROWN, HE PRAISED AMERICAN MUSEUMS AND THE ENORMOUS ENTHUSIASM OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR ART, BUT POINTED OUT THAT THE INDEX OF ART WORKS EXCLUDED FROM FOREIGN LOAN WAS PERSONALLY ENDORSED BY THE MINISTER OF CULTURE

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BERLIN 05827 02 OF 02 260844Z

FOR A SPECIFIC REASON --"TO NOT DISAPPOINT THE MILLIONS FROM ALL COUNTRIES WHO COME TO DRESDEN, A WORLD CULTURAL CENTER, TO SEE ITS GREAT PAINTINGS."

8. THE DISCUSSION ON CONTENT ENDED, AND MATTERS OF INSURANCE, CATALOGUE, PROTOCOL , OFFICIAL PRESENCE AND SPECIFIC DATES WERE THEN EXAMINED. THE GDR ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLE OF USG INDEMNITY. THE METROPOLITAN TOOK ON THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CATALOGUE, FACTUAL MATERIAL FOR ITS CONTENT TO BE PROVIDED BY THE GDR BUT THE FINAL VERSIONS TO BE PREPARED BY THE MET. ON PROTOCOL, THE U.S. DRAFT AGREEMENT WAS HANDED TO TAUTZ AND AFTER SOME PERUSAL, HE TOOK NOTE OF THE SECTION ON COSTS AND WHEN BROWN SAID IT WAS IN KEEPING WITH ALL SUCH ARRANGEMENTS, I.E., THAT THE SENDING SIDE PAY FOR ALL PACKING AND UNPACKING, THE GDR MEMBERS DID NOT APPEAR TO OBJECT. THE GDR WILL SIGN SEPARATE AGREEMENTS WITH EACH OF THE THREE MUSEUMS. IT WAS AGREED THAT A FINAL LIST OF OBJECTS, TOTALLING APPROXIMATELY 675, AND THE GDR DRAFT OF AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE US SIDE BY MID-JUNE SO THAT FOR INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS THE LIST COULD BE PUBLISHED IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER, AND THE AGREEMENTS THEN SIGNED. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE DRESDEN EXHIBIT WOULD BE SHOWN AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY FROM MAY 31 TO SEPTEMBER 4, 1978, AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM FROM OCTOBER 10, 1978 TO JANUARY 13, 1979, AND T THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO FROM FEBRUARY 18 TO MAY 26, 1979. (FYI - SAN FRANCISCO HAS NOW DECIDED TO ACCEPT THE ENTIRE EXHIBIT AS OPPOSED TO ITS EARLIER INTEREST IN AN ABBREVIATED VERSION. END FYI).

9. TAUTZ SAID ONLY TWO MATTERS REMAINED FOR THE PRESENT DISCUSSION. HE ASKED THAT A FINAL DECISION BE MADE ON THE OFFICIAL NAME OF THE EXHIBIT. BROWN RESPONDED THAT THE MATTER HAD ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 BERLIN 05827 02 OF 02 260844Z

AND PROPOSED " "DRESDEN: FIVE CENTURIES OF ART COLLECTING." THE GDR SIDE WENT INTO A HUDDLE THE FOLLOWING ALSO BE ADDED " AN EXHIBITION FROM THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC." BROWN'S HUDDLE WAS FAR BRIEFER AS THE OTHER TWO MUSEUM DIRECTORS UNHESITATINGLY NODDED, AND THE PROPOSAL WAS ACCEPTED.

TAUTZ THEN RAISED THE SECOND MATTER-WOULD THE AMERICAN MUSEUMS INVITE AN OFFICIAL GDR DELEGATION FOR ALL THREE OPENINGS, PERHAPS AT THE MINISTER OF CULTURAL LEVEL, AND FROM WHOM WOULD THE INVITATIONS COME. BROWN SAID THAT HIS STATUS WAS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF HIS COLLEAGUES, THAT HE WAS RESPONSIBLE TO BOTH THE USGAND TO A BOARD OF TRUSTEES BUT WOULD RAISE THE QUESTION UPON HIS RETURN. MONTEBELLO AND WHIT BOTH SAID THEIR BOARDS OF TRUSTEES WOULD MOST CERTAINLY WELCOME THE IDEA, AND THE LONG SESSION ENDED.

10. COMMENT: BROWN IS A SKILLFUL NEGOTIATOR, EXERCISING PATIENCE, TACT, FIRMNESS AND PERSEVERANCE. EVEN IN MOMENTS OF DISAGREEMENT, THERE WAS ALWAYS THE ATMOSPHERE - ON BOTH SIDES - OF A WILLINGNESS TO REACH ACCOMMODATION. IN FACT, DURING A PRIVATE POST MORTEM OF THE WEEK'S DISCUSSIONS, BROWN SAID AS MUCH AND DICTATED A LETTER TO TAUTZ IN WHICH HE REQUESTED ABOUT FIFTEEN ADDITIONAL WORKS BUT NOT THE KEY THREE. BROWN SAID AT BEST HE HOPED FOR THE VAN EYCK SINCE IT WAS SMALL ENOUGH TO CARRY BY HAND, AND HAD SO SUGGESTED EARLIER AT A DINNER IN WASHINGTON WITH GDR AMBASSADOR SIEBER. HE STILL CONSIDERED IT AN OUTSIDE CHANCE, POSSIBLY HANDCARRIED BY THE MINISTER OF CULTURE. ON THAT POINT, BROWN SAID THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF A U.S. CULTURAL COUNTERPART, HE WONDERED WHETHER THE SECRETARY MIGHT WISH TO EXTEND THE INVITATION HIMSELF AND SAID HE WOULD PURSUE THE IDEA IN WASHINGTON. POLANSKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARTS, EXHIBITS, MUSEUMS, CULTURAL EXCHANGES, NEGOTIATIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770144-1113
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From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770425/aaaaauns.tel
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BERLIN 7173
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2710302
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DRESDEN ART EXHIBIT
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To: STATE USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/53df16a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009